

Mid-Atlantic Haul/Beach Seine Fishery

Fishing gear type: Haul/beach seine

Current category: Category II*

Basis for current classification on the LOF: The 2010 LOF included a superscript “1” following bottlenose dolphin (WNA coastal stock) because the annual mortality and serious injury of that stock in this fishery was greater than 1% and less than 50% of the stock’s Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level. When the stocks of bottlenose dolphins killed/injured in this fishery were updated on the 2011 LOF, the superscript “1” was retained after each of these stocks because NMFS cannot yet differentiate to which stock a killed/injured animal belongs. Until NMFS is able to do so, each stock of bottlenose dolphin is considered to be driving the classification of the fishery.

Current list of marine mammal species/stocks injured/killed (a ⁽¹⁾ indicates those stocks driving the fishery’s classification): Bottlenose dolphin, Northern North Carolina (NC) estuarine system ⁽¹⁾; Bottlenose dolphin, Northern Migratory coastal ⁽¹⁾; Bottlenose dolphin, Southern Migratory coastal ⁽¹⁾.

Estimated number of current participants: 666

Take Reduction Teams/Plans that affect this fishery: Bottlenose Dolphin Take Reduction Plan (BDTRP), 50 CFR 229.35.

Year added to the LOF: 1996

Category when originally listed: Category II

Basis for original classification on the LOF: This fishery was listed as a Category II based on stranding network data. This fishery had a potential for high levels of interactions with harbor porpoise (Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy stock) and bottlenose dolphins (WNA coastal stock). Available stranding data recorded 3 bottlenose dolphins released live from this gear and 1 dead.

Estimated number of participants when originally listed: unknown

Past names, if any: “North Carolina haul seine fishery” until 1999; “Mid-Atlantic haul seine” until 2001.

Gear description/method for fishing: This fishery uses seines with one end secured (e.g., swipe nets and long seines); both ends secured; or those anchored to hauled up on the beach. The beach seine system is generally constructed of a wash, wing, and bunt that are attached to the beach and extend into the surf and are traditionally used to encircle or encompass fish. The fishery occurs in waters west of 72° 30' W. long. and north of a line extending due east from the North Carolina/South Carolina border. The only haul/beach seine gear operating in North Carolina included in this Category II fishery is the “Atlantic Ocean striped bass beach seine fishery” during the winter, as regulated by North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission rules (NCDMF) and NCDMF proclamations. NCDMF defines a beach seine operating under the Atlantic Ocean Striped Bass beach seine fishery as a “swipe net constructed of multifilament, multifiber webbing fished from the ocean beach that is deployed from a vessel launched from the ocean beach where the fishing operation takes place, and one end of the beach seine is attached to the shore at all times during the operation.” All other NC small and large mesh beach- anchored gillnets with webbing constructed of all monofilament material or a combination of monofilament and multifilament

* The fishery is classified based on mortalities and serious injuries of a marine mammal stock greater than 1% and less than 50% (Category II) of the stock’s Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level.

material were moved to the Category I Mid-Atlantic gillnet fishery in the final 2009 LOF because their construction and fishing technique were more similar to a gillnet than a traditional beach seine.

Target species: Striped bass, mullet, spot, weakfish, sea trout, bluefish, kingfish, and harvestfish.

Spatial/temporal distribution of effort: This fishery operates in waters west of 72° 30'W. long. and north of a line extending due east from the North Carolina/South Carolina border and includes haul seining in other areas of the mid-Atlantic, including Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey. The North Carolina Atlantic Ocean Striped Bass fishery operates primarily along the Outer Banks using small and large mesh nets and primarily during the fall and winter months.

Levels of observer coverage each year[†]: This fishery was observed from 1998-2001. There has been very limited observer coverage by the NEFSC and the North Carolina Alternative Platform Observer Program since 2001.

Management and regulations: The fishery is managed under several state and Interstate Fishery Management Plans and is an affected fishery under the BDTRP. Large mesh nets are regulated in North Carolina via North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission rules and NCDMF proclamations.

History of Changes on the LOF

2011 LOF:

- Updated the stock name for bottlenose dolphins killed/injured in this fishery, based on the revised stock structure presented in the final 2008 and 2009 SARs. Replaced bottlenose dolphin (WNA coastal) with the following stocks: bottlenose dolphin (Northern NC estuarine system); bottlenose dolphin (Northern Migratory coastal); bottlenose dolphin (Southern Migratory coastal).
- Retained a superscript “1” after each of these stocks because the 2010 LOF includes a superscript “1” following bottlenose dolphin (WNA coastal) and NMFS cannot yet differentiate to which stock a killed/injured animal belongs. Until NMFS is able to do so, each stock of bottlenose dolphin is considered to be driving the classification of the fishery.
- Estimated number of participants updated from 25 to 666. This estimation may be an inflation of actual effort; however, it represents the potential effort for the fishery, given the multiple gear types several state permits may allow for.

2010 LOF: Updated the fishery description to reflect multiple amendments and changes in state regulations.

2009 LOF: Updated the fishery description to be consistent with a NCDMF rulemaking, distinguishing between beach-anchored gillnets and traditional beach seines.

2008 LOF: Stated in the final rule that the fishery is undergoing change, particularly pertaining to NC beach gear, due to pending rulemakings by the NCDMF. An updated fishery description will be provided in future LOFs.

2007 LOF: Harbor porpoise (Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy) deleted from the list of species/stocks killed/injured in this fishery because the most recent 5 years of data (1999-2003) and other information indicated a lack of evidence that this species was seriously injured or killed in the fishery.

2006 LOF: Added a superscript “1” in Table 2 after bottlenose dolphin (WNA coastal), indicating that this stock is driving the fishery’s categorization.

2001 LOF:

- This fishery was divided into two fisheries: this fishery and the Category II "North Carolina long haul seine fishery."

[†] Observer coverage levels include the latest information reported in the most current final Stock Assessment Report (SAR).

- Renamed this fishery from the "Mid-Atlantic haul seine" to the "Mid-Atlantic haul/beach seine" to clarify the gear used in the fishery. This fishery includes seines where one end is secured, as well as seines that may be secured at both ends and hauled up on the beach.

1999 LOF: Renamed from the "North Carolina haul seine fishery" to the "Mid-Atlantic haul seine fishery" because of reports that this fishery operated in several other mid-Atlantic states including North Carolina, Virginia and New Jersey.

1998 LOF: Estimated number of participants updated from unknown to 25.